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Statement on EAST TIMOR to the UN Committee of 24

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Jonathan Head

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The Indonesia Human Rights Campaign

8a Treport Street, London SW18 2BP. Phone 01 874-3262

Indonesian rule in East Timor, 1987

Chairperson and honorable members of the Decolonisation Committee,

As the representative of TAPOL, the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign, I am grateful for this opportunity to present a submission on the continuing tragedy of the people of East Timor whose country was brutally invaded by Indonesian forces nearly twelve years ago and who still live under the heel of Indonesian colonialism. With your permission, I shall deal with four topics: the structure of Indonesia's control of East Timor, the birth control and transmigration programmes or the depopulation and repopulation of East Timor, and the illegal general election of April 1987.

1. Indonesian control: East Timor's special status

As Indonesia's so-called '27th province', East Timor is administered in a way that distinguishes it from any Indonesian province. It is East Timor's position as a colonial territory that accounts for its special status.

The most important distinctive feature is that the military structure of East Timor is unique. It falls under a special military command, Komando Operasi Keamanan Timor Timur or Security Operations Command of East Timor, or Kopskam Timtim, which is directly subordinate to the armed forces headquarters in Jakarta. The present commander, Brigadier-General Mantiri, like his predecessor, is concurrently commander of the First Infantry Division of Kostrad, the Army Strategic Command. This division is Indonesia's most advanced and best-equipped fighting force, with a complete range of military units - infantry, tanks, strike-force troops and rapid-deployment forces, as well as its own sea and air support. The combination of these two command positions in the hands of one general reveals the extent to which East Timor is treated as a war zone with special security problems for the forces of occupation.

The civilian administration of the territory is also quite distinct. Unlike any Indonesian province, there is, in addition to the paraphernalia of the 'provincial' administration, a special team based in Jakarta called Team Pelaksana Pembangunan Pusat Timor Timur or Central Implementation Team for the Development of East Timor. This Team coordinates the various departmental activities in East Timor. In East Timor, this coordination is in the hands of the Team Pelaksana Pembangunan Daerah or Regional Implementation Team for Development which, in the words of Governor Carrascalao, is charged with "coordinating policy relating to administration, development and the restoration of security" [Sinar Harapan, 23 July 1986]. This underlines the close connection between Indonesia's much-vaunted developmental activities in

East Timor and its security interests.

For the purposes of external consumption, the 'provincial' administration, under its articulate and energetic governor, Mario Viegas Carrascalao, is the body responsible for running East Timor's affairs. In actual fact, power rests with Kopskam TimTim and its high command in Jakarta, working at the centre with the Team Pelaksana Pusat. Carrascalao recently told a Japanese journalist that his authority as governor is extremely limited. "Everything is decided under the guidance of the military," he said [Yomiuri Shimbun, 11 September 1986].

Important changes are taking place in the structure of government in East Timor. Since 1 April this year, the territory has been split into three 'development regions', each under an assistant governor. The first, eastern region covers Baucau, Viqueque, Lautem and Manatuto with Baucau as the 'growth centre'. The second, central region, includes Ermera, Liquica, Aileu and Manufahi with Ermera as the 'growth centre'. The third, located in the west, is centred in Maliana and includes Bobonaro, Oecusse, Ainaro and Kovalima. All three assistant governors are army officers, Colonel Daryono, Lieutenant-Colonel Hidayat and Lieutenant-Colonel Ginting [Suara Pembaruan, 30 March 1987]. This new structure has further diminished the scope of Governor Carrascalao's administrative role and in effect supercedes the thirteen second-level or district (kabupaten) administrative units into which the territory is divided.

The next major re-organisation affects the villages or re-settlement areas. According to military strategists and their technocratic advisers in Jakarta, the present administrative structure, a legacy from the Portuguese colonial era, is too cumbersome and must be simplified. At present, there are thirteen districts (kabupatens), sixty-two sub-districts (kecamatan) and 1,873 villages [East Timor Provincial Statistics Office, "Village Directory of the Province of East Timor, 1985"]. In most cases, villages are synonymous with the re-settlement areas set up in the late 1970s for security purposes. Plans were announced last year for the villages to be regrouped into larger units, reducing the number of villages to 412 [Pelita, 11 October 1986].

The new villages will be standardised in size, each with a population of 300 families. Thus for example, Basoeki Adisukma, head of the East Timor transmigration office, announced that 300 families in Ariana and Uaibobo villages would be re-settled in a single village [Pedoman Rakyat, 23 December 1986]. Basoeki at the same time announced that this massive programme of re-resettlement of East Timor villagers would pave the way for a much larger influx of transmigrants from Indonesia [Kompas, 24 December 1986].

Reducing the number of villages is part of the army's strategy for tighter control over the population, in a system where security objectives and

economic development go hand in hand. This programme will again mean major upheavals for the people of East Timor who have undergone re-settlement at the hands of their Indonesian colonisers a number of times already. Fewer villages will make it easier for territorial troops to have a larger presence in each population centre, making the army's task of economic management that much more effective. When Colonel Yunus Yosfiah, commander of the East Timor Wira Dharma Regional Military Command (Korem), said that the best way to cope with the armed resistance was by improving living standards [Tempo, 19 July 1986], he revealed the extent to which economic programmes are designed to serve security objectives.

Territorial army personnel stationed in each village will engage in so-called civic duties in addition to their security tasks. Indeed, the armed forces are already engaged in 'ABRI masuk desa' or the 'armed forces enter the villages' programme during which troops do special duties in the villages such as building roads and bridges or working on other projects. These projects primarily serve the army's need for better roads and communications.

At the 'provincial' level, the emphasis of economic development is on a number of special programmes, the foremost being transmigration and the family planning programme which are discussed below. Governor Carrascalao appears to have set himself additional priorities, neither of which has much chance of success. He often laments the lack of job opportunities for young East Timorese who have graduated from Indonesian schools in East Timor and in Java. This is because so many senior, middle-ranking and junior posts in government service and elsewhere are occupied by Indonesians [Jakarta Post, 2 May 1987].

His other main concern is the corruption among Indonesian officials in East Timor. He estimates that forty per cent of funds for development is corrupted by government officials [Pelita, 23 July 1986]. As the saying goes in East Timor: "Money flies from Jakarta to Dili airport, then flies straight back to Jakarta."

2. De-populating and re-populating East Timor

Faced with resolute opposition to Indonesian integration among the people, the Indonesian authorities are pressing ahead to de-populate and re-populate East Timor. De-population began with the genocidal war waged against East Timor, resulting by the end of 1979 in the death of an estimated 200,000 people, almost a third of the pre-invasion population. De-population is being continued by means of birth control known as the family planning programme. The instrument for re-population is the programme of officially-organised transmigration along with informal or spontaneous migration.

The birth control programme

Birth control is being imposed on East Timorese families against their wishes. Traditionally, East Timorese people favour large families, a preference reinforced by the grief of having suffered so many casualties in the last eleven years. Widespread adherence to Catholicism further reinforces the opposition to birth control.

The programme was strongly criticised in a pastoral letter from Monsignor Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, apostolic administrator of East Timor, on 3 March 1985 when he complained that family planning officials "simply distribute pills to ignorant people or give injections to unsuspecting women with the intention 'of conquering the largest possible number of people'". He accused agents of the programme of handing out contraceptives indiscriminately, provoking "feelings of fear and discomfort... among Christians."

In April 1985, the headquarters of the 'provincial' office of the National Family Planning Institute (BKKBN) was opened. The building was almost entirely funded by the World Bank [Berita Yudha, 26 April 1985]. TAPOL strongly protests against the World Bank's support for the birth control programme in East Timor. Not only is it an affront to the people of East Timor already devastated by a dramatic decline in numbers. It also violates the UN's official position of not recognising East Timor as a part of Indonesia.

Evidence that East Timorese women resist the programme became public when two Catholic priests from East Timor, Mariano Soares and Yoseph Capital, told Dr Haryono Suyono, the chief of BKKBN, that East Timor women object to using contraceptives [Merdeka, 19 May 1987]. Although Dr Haryono agreed that Church-favoured methods of abstinence could play a role, there has been no change in the focus on contraceptives. Last August, a BKKBN official in the central district of East Timor complained that only 6.5 per cent of the couples targetted (696 out of 10,571 couples of child-bearing age) in the region had agreed to practice birth control [Suara Merdeka, 21 August 1986].

The East Timor BKKBN intends to recruit seven thousand new acceptors by March 1988, bringing the total number of women in the programme to eleven thousand [Merdeka, 2 June 1987]. According to the BKKBN, there are 80,000 couples of child-bearing age in East Timor. The birth control programme there is now nearing completion of the first stage during which fifteen per cent of child-bearing families (12,000 couples) should become contraceptive acceptors.

Dr Haryono justifies plans to intensify birth control in East Timor because he claims that it contributes to improving the health of mothers and babies in East Timor where mortality rates are exceptionally high. In his own words, the death rate among women during pregnancy and childbirth is between

twenty and twenty-five per cent [Merdeka, 19 May 1987]. Indonesian officials also refer frequently to an alarming mortality rate among babies, though figures published in the press are not precise enough to be used for analytical purposes.

Information from resistance sources in Dili reveals that the high death rate among women during pregnancy and childbirth is the direct consequence of the birth control programme. They point out that:

* Birth control pills, capsules and IUDs are freely distributed.
* Pregnant women are often persuaded to have treatment with harmful consequences for the ovary or foetus, resulting in a miscarriage. They therefore avoid attending ante-natal clinics or having babies in maternity wards. If there are complications, the risks are very high.
* Women with infected ovaries, often the result of unsupervised contraceptive usage, are prevailed upon to have their ovary removed.
* Newly-married women are advised to be sterilised and told it will improve their health and keep them young.
* In schools, colleges and family-welfare clinics, there is persistent propaganda about birth control and the benefits of having small families.
* Women who practise birth control suffer anaemia, loss of blood and other disorders which often prove fatal.
* Whereas birth control pills and IUDs are distributed free of charge, medicine even for common ailments is in short supply and very expensive. It costs at least five thousand rupiahs to consult a doctor. Medical facilities and personnel in East Timor are devoted primarily to birth control with scant attention to health care and the treatment of disease. [See letter from Jaquel Machado in Dili, 12 April 1987.]

The imposition of birth control on East Timorese women is a serious violations of their civil rights. Far from being a remedy for the high death rate among East Timorese women of child-bearing age, it is itself a major if not the primary cause of this mortality.

The transmigration programme and spontaneous migration

Side by side with de-population goes the re-population of East Timor with Indonesians. This takes two forms, the official transmigration programme, the resettlement of farmers from Java or other densely-populated islands onto agricultural sites, and informal or spontaneous migration which swells the population in urban areas.

As yet, official transmigration in East Timor is progressing rather slowly, primarily because so much fertile land beyond the towns and roads is

still u[redacted] the control of armed resistance forces. Since 1982, 825 families have been resettled in East Timor, among them 399 families from outside, mostly from Bali, and 426 East Timorese families, called 'translocals'. The main transmigration sites are in Bobonaro and Kovalima, both near the border with West Timor which was pacified early in Indonesia's war of conquest [Kompas, 24 December 1986]. An additional one hundred families from the East Java Christian Church in Jember have been settled in Viqueque [Mutiara, 30 July - 12 August 1986].

At the end of 1986, the head of the East Timor transmigration office in East Timor announced plans for a significant increase in the scale of transmigration throughout East Timor, claiming that this was now possible because security was much improved. The programme would first require the re-resettlement of many East Timorese families (already resettled on a number of occasions) to make land available for incoming transmigrants. The first site would be set up near Baucau and would accommodate three hundred families [Kompas, 24 December 1986].

Although Carrascalao supports transmigration, he is clearly worried that incoming farmers are likely to outstrip the Timorese because it is their style of agriculture that is being promoted. He talks about the need for a "fair balance" in land ownership between newcomers and local farmers, and has called for a four-to-one ratio in favour of Timorese to preclude the possibility of newcomers dominating agriculture [Jakarta Post, 17 July 1986].

Carrascalao was also quoted as saying that by the year 2000, the population of East Timor could reach one million [Mutiara 30 July - 12 August 1986]. Were this to come true, half the people in East Timor would by then be Indonesians, not East Timorese.

Carrascalao's forecast might be considered fanciful if one takes account only of official transmigration. However, it could well prove correct considering the far greater influx of non-sponsored migrants into East Timor from all parts of Indonesia. Many Indonesian soldiers, civil servants and teachers now living and working in Dili and other towns have brought their families in, some with the intention of settling down. Indonesians from all walks of life have moved in, taking over commerce, petty trading, construction work, and crafts like tailoring and cobbling. The influx has transformed Lospalos, Viqueque, Baucau, Manatuto, Ermera, Ainaro, Liquica and in particular Dili into Indonesian towns.

One Indonesian journalist has described how Dili has been transformed, becoming indistinguishable from any provincial Indonesian town. All the popular traditional foods from different parts of Indonesia - soto Makasar, martabak, gado-gado siram, pisang goreng, es teler and sate kambing - are available on the streets of Dili [Sinar Harapan, 1 July 1986]. Such a

transformation can only have taken place with the arrival [redacted] street vendors from many parts of Indonesia. This kind of detail is symptomatic of a large influx of Indonesians.

Resistance sources in Dili believe that no-one, not even Governor Carrascalao, knows how many Indonesians have flooded into East Timor in the past few years. They say the figure could be as high as 20,000 [see letter from Joquel Machado, 25 April 1987]. East Timorese are understandably bitter about this influx. It is deeply offensive to them to see newcomers nudging their way in, gaining control of the shops and market-places and causing urban populations to soar, while they are under constant pressure to keep their numbers down. The only logic in such a development is the logic of a colonial power determined to swamp its disloyal colonial subjects with loyal and trustworthy citizens.

3. The illegal election of April 1987

Indonesia used the occasion of its parliamentary general elections in April 1987 to force the people of East Timor to participate in elections for parliament (DPR) and for 'provincial' and district assemblies (DPRD-I and DPRD-IIs) in East Timor. These elections were the occasion for a campaign of intimidation against the population. From late 1986 up to polling day on 23 April 1987, there was a prevailing atmosphere of intense pressure aimed at ensuring that everyone voted and that the government party, Golkar obtained a huge majority in East Timor.

The two most senior figures in the government, General Benny Murdani, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and Foreign Minister Dr Mochtar Kusumaatmadja who headed the list of Golkar candidates for East Timor, visited East Timor twice during the weeks preceeding polling day to make sure that the elections proceeded without disruption, and to give the impression to the outside world that the population enthusiastically welcomed this chance to vote. General Murdani made his second visit to East Timor in the company of Lieutenant-General Sudradjat, armed forces deputy chief-of-staff, Lieutenant-General Soegiarto, chief-of-staff for social and political affairs, and Major-General Rajaguguk, commander of the IXth Udayana Military Command based in Bali. This was an 'on-the-spot inspection' to examine security during the final days of the elections. Special security measures had long been in preparation to safeguard the elections against attacks by the guerrilla forces and against possible boycotts among the civilian population. Troop reinforcements brought the total number of troops up to thirty battalions.

Reports from resistance sources inside East Timor describe the lengths to

which the occupation authorities went to intimidate people:

* All government officials were required to attend election meetings and conduct coaching sessions on how to vote. People were promised bribes if they voted for Golkar.
* Local military commanders (babinsa), district, sub-district and village heads (bupati, camat and lurah) exerted pressure on people to vote for Golkar.
* Attendance at election coaching sessions was compulsory. People were warned that if they did not vote, they could be labelled communists, resistance fighters or anti-Pancasila (anti the state ideology) and face banishment to Atauro, imprisonment or death.
* Secret agents were planted everywhere to spy on the population. School-pupils were recruited to spy on their schoolmates, office workers to spy on fellow-workers while informers spied on priests and catechists.
* In the weeks prior to the elections, people were forbidden to gather in groups of more than three persons in the streets and in private homes.
* Troops were sent out on operations against guerrillas active in the eastern and central sectors of East Timor and in parts of the west.

The voting procedure

The people of East Timor were required to vote for one of three Indonesian parties, the only parties allowed to participate in the elections. Besides Golkar (Golongan Karya), the government party, they are the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan), a forced merger of Indonesian Muslim parties, and the PDI (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia), a forced merger of Indonesian nationalist and Christian parties. These two parties have long since lost their former identities, having been required by law to adopt Pancasila, the state ideology, as their only ideology. In any case, all three parties are historically irrelevant to the people of East Timor.

As in 1982, the turnout on polling day (362,507) was in excess of the number of registered voters (360,144). There is no way of checking whether this was because of rigged counting of the votes but in any case, the discrepancy can also be accounted for by the continuous influx of Indonesians into East Timor.

Although ideologically, the three parties were identical, the government was determined to win a landslide for Golkar. Anything less might have been construed as a protest vote against integration. Golkar won 93.7 per cent of the votes and the PDI came second with 5.57 per cent. Governor Carrascalao used the PDI vote which was a few percentage points higher than in 1982 to claim that this proved "there was freedom for the East Timorese to cast their

votes" [Kompas, 27 April 1987]. What he neglected to [redacted] was that the people of East Timor were denied the freedom not to vote in this illegal election.

But the hypocrisy of Carrascalao's claim is even more glaring if we examine the way voting was organised in the polling booths. In the first place, unlike procedures elsewhere, voters in East Timor were not allowed to pierce a party symbol on their voting slip and put the slip into a single box. Instead, they had register their vote by placing the slip in one of three party boxes. A document from Dili describes how voting took place:

> "The three party boxes were placed on a table. The PPP box was on the right corner, the Golkar box was in the middle and the PDI box was on the left corner. The rectangular-shaped table on which the three boxes were placed was about 2.5 metres long. The table was hidden by a curtain which did not reach down to the floor, leaving the legs of the table exposed. As each voter approached the table to place her/his slip in one of the boxes, the direction in which the person was moving was clearly obvious. To help those invigilating at the booths, lists were kept showing into which box each person placed their voting slip. Generally speaking all the people invigilating at the polling booths were Golkar members or persons paid by Golkar. Such is the sorry state of elections conducted by Indonesia." [See letter from Joao Freitas da Camara, Jakarta, 20 March 1987]

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Chairperson and members of the Decolonisation Committee,

Each extra year of Indonesia's illegal occupation of East Timor prolongs the agony of its courageous people. There can be no justification for any further postponement of the exercise of their right to self-determination. To delay matters only gives the Indonesian authorities yet more time to pursue their policy of genocide and their grand design of transforming the population of East Timor. TAPOL takes this opportunity to call on the United Nations to take all the necessary steps for the immediate withdrawal of Indonesian troops from East Timor and to conduct an act of self-determination under international supervision.

August 1987